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of earth, though leaves had blown in over it and had matted down to form a suitable covering. Two feet away was a second cavity similar to the first that had been occupied by another box turtle. These two sites were on the broad top of a slight knoll in an old weed-grown field ten feet from the border of the woods.

Dr. A. K. Fisher states that during the past fifty years he has found many box turtles in hibernation and that all were resting in shallow excavations with only a slight protection of earth above them. This seems, therefore, to be the normal ordinary manner for them to spend the winter. They rely apparently upon the drifting of fallen leaves and the breaking down of surrounding herbage to aid in giving them sufficient cover.

ALEXANDER WETMORE,  
*Washington, D. C.*

## NOTES ON AMPHIUMA AND NECTURUS

The northern water dog (*Necturus maculosus*) is not a common animal here at Raleigh and never attains the size of northern specimens. From 1894 to the present time I have records of twenty-one specimens, though others, not recorded, have also been taken. Of these, one was taken in February, nine in March, eight in April, two in May and one in November. So far as I know, all were caught on hook and line in Neuse River, and of the seven of which measurements were preserved, the smallest was 144 and the largest 186 mm. in length. None approached *N. punctatus* in any way except in the small size, the markings being those of *maculosus* as well as the structural characters.

The ditch eel (*Amphiura means*) appears to be abundant in the wet swampy meadows along Walnut Creek, and in all other suitable situations, but is seldom found except by men engaged in digging or in cleaning out old ditches in such places. One man

informed me that when an old ditch was cleaned out, the eels burrow into the sides of the ditch, and that when the water is drained off from the ditch and it begins to run in from the surrounding meadow, the eels come back and can be caught. He also said that they were caught in cleaning out old ditches, not in digging new ones. I have never myself come across a living specimen here, though I suppose at least two hundred specimens have been brought to me, perhaps twice that number; but have come across a few dead ones, perhaps a dozen in all. They are universally feared as poisonous, presumably on account of their snake-like form, but are always called "eels," never "snakes," the usual name at present among the ditchers being "ditch eel"; though in former days, and at present among fishermen, "lampus eel" was the more common name. At Greensboro, Alabama, "lamper eel" is the common name, while Dr. J. W. P. Smithwick, who once sent me one from Bertie Co., N. C., said that in that vicinity it is commonly known as "deaf adder." I have never heard the names "congo eel" or "congo snake" applied to the species, and have often wondered if it was not a corruption and misapplication of "conger eel."

In size I have seen specimens as small as three inches in length, and as large as twenty-eight inches. The small ones were taken in February (Feb. 22, 1894; Feb. 24, 1916), but none possessed gills. I have never taken eggs in this locality.

The "voice" of this species, which I have frequently seen alluded to in literature, appears to me to be nothing more than the noise caused by the expulsion of air through the spiracles, and is not, I believe, a "voice" in the accepted sense of the word, any more than a cough or sneeze is.

As to the animal's food I know but little; crayfish, however, have been found in a few stomachs, and large clawed crayfish at that. In captivity they will live indefinitely in water that contains plenty of rot-

ting vegetable matter, but putrid animal matter in the water kills them very quickly.

C. S. BRIMLEY,  
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## EGGS OF THE SWAMP TREE FROG

While traveling along the state highway in the southern part of Logan, Utah, on the 15th of May, 1919, I heard great numbers of the swamp tree frog, *Pseudacris triseriata*, uttering their characteristic songs. I found this amphibian very common in small ponds at the roadside, and there were scores of egg masses, attached in most cases to blades of grass. No tadpoles had yet appeared. So numerous were the egg masses that I collected a representative lot of them. The number of eggs in the twenty-two egg masses taken were as follows: 66, 45, 53, 33, 65, 46, 88, 38, 40, 67, 32, 50, 64, 87, 77, 15, 65, 51, 73, 45, 130, and 190.

The number of eggs here found is much greater than that typical of the species as given by Dickerson in *The Frog Book*, i. e., 5 to 20 (page 159). The masses containing 130 and 190 eggs respectively seem extreme. There is a possibility that two egg masses became fused in these cases, but except for the fact that the numbers of eggs are unusually high there is no reason for believing so, as the gelatinous material remained in one compact body, and gave no evidence of a multiple origin.

HERBERT J. PACK,  
*Farmington, Utah.*

## NOTE ON *MELANEMYD* SHUFELDT

Dr. Shufeldt has recently (*Aquatic Life*, August, 1919, pp. 155-7) described a new genus of turtles based on *Clemmys guttata*, *C. muhlenbergii* and *C. marmorata*. He names no type.